

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A system for decorating food products, said system comprising:
means for controlling the operation of the system;
means for inputting an image to said means for controlling the operation;
an edible media for receiving a printed image;
means for printing an image received from said means for controlling the operation onto said edible media; and
means for moving said edible media through said means for printing
wherein said image is printed onto said edible media as said edible media is moved through said means for printing.

2. The system of claim 1 wherein said means for printing an image onto said edible media includes:
means for printing on said edible media with edible inks.

3. The system of claim 1 wherein said means for printing an image onto said edible media includes:
means for printing an image in precise and consistent reproduction of colors in accordance with a color model using edible inks.

4. The system of claim 1 wherein said means for printing an image onto said edible media includes:
means for printing an image in precise and consistent reproduction of colors in accordance with the standard CMYK color model.

5. The system of claim 1 wherein said means for printing on said edible media includes:

edible inks formulated from food grade products in the colors of cyan, magenta, yellow and black to render precise and consistent colors as percentages of those colors in accordance with the CMYK color model.

6. The system of claim 1 wherein said means for printing an image includes:
an inkjet printing system.

7. The system of claim 1 wherein said means for printing an image includes:
thermal inkjet technology.

8. The system of claim 1 wherein said means for printing an image includes:
liquid piezo inkjet technology.

9. The system of claim 1 wherein said means for printing an image includes:
solid piezo inkjet technology.

10. The system of claim 1 wherein said means for printing an image includes:
continuous inkjet technology.

11. The system of claim 1 wherein said means for printing an image includes:
valve jet inkjet technology.

12. The system of claim 1 wherein said means for printing an image includes:
electrostatic inkjet technology.

13. The system of claim 1 wherein said means for printing an image includes:

airbrush ink technology.

14. The system of claim 1 wherein said edible media comprises:
an edible layer having a consistency and thickness capable of traveling through the conveying mechanism of a printer; and

a coating on a portion of said edible layer for receiving edible ink to form a high quality pictorial image.

15. The edible layer of claim 14 wherein said edible layer includes:
a fondant layer.

16. The edible layer of claim 14 wherein said edible layer includes:
a base formed from starch.

17. The edible layer of claim 14 wherein said edible layer includes:
a rice paper layer.

18. The edible media of claim 14 wherein said coating includes:
calcium carbonate as an ingredient.

19. The system of claim 1 wherein said means for controlling the operation of the system includes:

a computer processing unit; and

a touch screen interface for selecting commands for operation of the system.

20. The system of claim wherein said means for inputting an image includes:

at least one digital image source.

21. A process for creating an edible item from a selected image by the movement of said edible item through a printing system for printing an image onto said edible item, wherein said process comprises the steps of:

providing at least one ink formed of an edible food ink for use in said printing system; and

providing an edible media capable of being moved through the said printing system for receiving said at least one ink thereon from said printing system.

22. The process of claim 21 wherein said step of providing at least one ink formed of an edible food ink includes the steps of:

providing a set of inks suitable for use in an inkjet printing system and formulated from food grade materials in accordance with standard color models.

23. The process of claim 21 wherein said step of providing at least one ink formed of an edible food ink includes the steps of:

a first ink suitable for use in an inkjet printing system and formed from food grade products in the color of cyan;

a second ink suitable for use in an inkjet printing system and formed from food grade products in the color of magenta;

a third ink suitable for use in an inkjet printing system and formed from food grade products in the color of yellow; and

a fourth ink suitable for use in an inkjet printing system and formed from food grade products in the color of black; wherein said set of edible inks are applied in an inkjet system onto an edible media to render precise and consistent colors as percentages of their respective colors in accordance with the CMYK color model.

24. The process of claim 21 wherein said step of providing an edible media includes the steps of:

providing a layer of edible material capable of movement through said printing system; and

providing a coating on a portion of said edible material for receiving said at least ink to form a high quality pictorial rendition of said selected image.

25. A process for creating a decorative food item from a selected image in a printing system having a media path for movement of an edible media along said media path to at least one printhead, said process comprising the steps of:

inserting said edible media into the media path of the printing system;
selecting an image to be printed on said edible media;

activating the printing system to cause said edible media to move along said media path of said printing system so that said selected image is printed on said edible media in a pictorial rendition of said image.

26. The process of claim 25 wherein said edible media includes:
an edible layer; and

a coating on a portion of said edible layer for receiving ink from said printing system in a high quality pictorial rendition of said selected image.

27. The process of claim 25 wherein said printing system includes:

a set of inks formulated from food grade materials for use in said printing system and capable of providing precise color matching with a standard color model.

28. The process of claim 25 wherein said printing system includes a set of inks comprising:

a first ink suitable for use in an inkjet printing system and formed from food grade products in the color of cyan;

a second ink suitable for use in an inkjet printing system and formed from food grade products in the color of magenta;

a third ink suitable for use in an inkjet printing system and formed from food grade products in the color of yellow; and

a fourth ink suitable for use in an inkjet printing system and formed from food grade products in the color of black; wherein said set of edible inks are applied in an inkjet system onto an edible media to render precise and consistent colors as percentages of their respective colors in accordance with the CMYK color model.

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